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which may be twisted to support his particular obliquity toward the existing order.

O. G. LIBBY

Social Forces in American History. By A. M. Simons. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913. 325 p. \$1.50)

The author of this work states that his purpose is to explain those facts of American history whose existence is undisputed rather than to record new or bizarre facts. An examination of the volume, however, shows that his real aim is to reconcile the facts of American history with the teachings of Karl Marx, especially with the doctrines of economic determinism and the class struggle. He might more appropriately have named the book "A Socialistic Interpretation of American History." The fundamental cause of every great historical movement he finds, as a matter of course, to be economic. Behind every important event he discovers a skulking capitalist. Land speculators, among them George Washington, and merchant smugglers, of whom John Hancock was chief, finding British control an obstacle to their schemes, temporarily joined forces with the debtor classes, who were also angered at the home government on account of its hostility to currency inflation, and precipitated the Revolution after the return of peace the commercial class, by "a conspiratory trick," secretly framed a constitution designed to give them control of the new government and forced it upon the people by gerrymandering and disfranchisement.

This explanation of the origin of American independence and nationality is in keeping with the rest of the work. From 1861 to 1865, we are told, capitalism fattened on the "offal of war," and at the close of the struggle sat enthroned over the nation. But this monarch now finds his sovereignty disputed by labor, and a new class struggle has ensued. Here the author drops the rôle of historian and essays that of a prophet, predicting the inevitable downfall of capitalism and the consequent triumph of labor. As the work seeks to cover the entire period of American history since 1492 the treatment of any single movement is necessarily meager as well as unscientific. To avowed Marxian socialists the volume will undoubtedly be welcome, but it will hardly make converts of others, as its interpretation of history is neither convincing nor enlightening.

WILLIAM O. SCROGGS

Unpopular Government in the United States. By Albert M. Kales, professor of law, Northwestern University. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1914. 263 p. \$1.50)

It is easy to grasp the fundamental ideas of the book because the au-

thor has apparently, in his own mind, a clearly defined political philosophy and, what is equally important, he has a clear, straightforward logical style in which he expresses his ideas. When the makers of our state and local governments, during the middle of the nineteenth century, undertook to free this country from unpopular government, i. e., government by the few, they applied the device of division of power among many separate offices and required the widest and most frequent use of the elective principle. This cast such a great burden upon the electorate that even intelligent citizens were reduced to a state of political ignorance; and, as a consequence, a well organized, extralegal hierarchy developed, which controlled the government in the face of popular disapproval, for selfish ends. The leaders of this extralegal government, the author calls the "politocrats," and the government they maintain — for in his opinion they have always controlled government — constitutes a "politocracy."

The first part of the volume deals with the rise of the politocrats; the second describes the war on politocracy by such expedients as the Australian ballot, the voter's leagues, the abolition of the party circle and the party column, the primaries, the initiative and referendum, the recall, and the independent movements including the Progressive party. But all these proposed remedies failed to restore the American ideal of democracy, because none of them struck at the vital evil, namely, political ignorance. On the contrary, the recent democratic wave which brought to shore these new expedients complicated matters still more by imposing excessive burdens upon the voter. The initiative and referendum compelled the voter, in addition to selecting officials, to read proposed laws and to pass upon their meaning, the terms of which in many cases they did not understand. The Progressive party does not propose to eliminate the extralegal machine, but depends upon it; likewise the recall of judges and judicial decisions would still further, in the opinion of the author, befog the elector by imposing upon him the task of passing upon the merits of decisions which require expert judgment.

The third part of the volume deals with constructive proposals, such as the commission form of government for small cities, and an application of the commission principle to larger cities and to states and even to the selection of judges. The proposals for the government of large cities are somewhat similar to the plan in German cities; the remedy for state governments calls to mind the English system of cabinet government, though not in detail. In general he advocates the union of the executive with the legislature, and the sum of his philosophy lies in the short ballot.

The reviewer finds himself in general agreement with the author,

though he believes that the realization of some of his proposals lies far in the future. This, however, the author, at least by implication, avows. One question the skeptical political scientist may still raise even after reading to the conclusion of this excellent volume: What assurance does the short ballot give of abolishing the politocrat? He came with the birth of government and will in all probability continue till the race has run its course through all conceivable forms of government. But at any rate a simpler form will give the people an easier and more direct access to their political institutions. On the whole, the work embodies sound political thought, and it is certainly an admirable summary of the most advanced ideas on government.

KARL F. GEISER

The American Year Book. A Record of Events and Progress, 1913.

Edited by Francis G. Wickware, B. A., B. Sc., under the direction of a supervising board representing national learned societies. New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1913. 892 p. \$3.00)

This is the fourth issue of a volume which has made for itself a very important place among the reference books of the library. There have been a few changes in the subdivision of topics in the various departments, but in general the character of the work remains unchanged. The purpose of the *American Year Book* is very different from that of other annuals of similar name, the content of which is largely made up of statistics of elections, the personnel of governments, etc. Instead of these, we find statements of the progress made in the various departments of human endeavor. Besides the usual chapters on history and government, there are included excellent discussions of social and economic changes, and statements of the progress in the various sciences. Curiously enough there is, except for a short list of some histories published during the year, no account of the progress in historical research to be found in the volume, although the interest of the editorial staff seems to have been catholic in its selection of the other sciences. The addition of an historian to the editorial staff might correct this omission in future issues.

C. W. A.

The Economic Utilization of History and other Economic Studies. By

Henry W. Farnam, professor of economics, Yale University.

(New Haven: Yale University Press; London: Henry

Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1913. 220 p. \$1.25 net)

Most of the material contained in this volume has been published before, as presidential addresses before the Economic Association and